RAILROAD SLIDE SPECIAL OF THE MONTH — JANUARY:

LAST DAYS OF THE CALIFORNIA ZEPHYR

— — —

This set of 6 color slides was made in March, 1970, shortly before the removal of the Western Pacific run of the California Zephyr.

1. Zephyr approaches Oakland station as crowd waits.
2. Boarding the Zephyr at Oakland; a picture of tension as passengers surge forward.
3. Loading the baggage car "Silver Bear."
4. Shot forward from a dome car in the Feather River Canyon; entire front end visible, including private car of Western Pacific's president.
5. Westbound CZ immobilized in Feather River Canyon by mud slide as bulldozers clear the track.
6. WP switcher moves four CZ cars (incl. pres. car) thru snow at Portola to couple to westbound train.

This set only $1.50 for orders postmarked before Feb. 1. Request set X-7 (Californians add 8¢ sales tax). MESSAGE MEDIA, P.O. BOX 9007, Berkeley, Calif. 94709.

Next issue of Rail Travel Newsletter (January 18) wil feature an unusual article on passenger train adverti. ing today. Coming in Feb.: 1970 chronology of rail events!

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

RAIL TRAVEL NEWSLETTER, Vol. 1, No. 3
Published by Message Media, P. O. Box 9007, Berkeley, California 94709. U.S.A.

To:

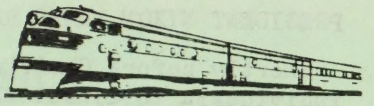
FIRST CLASS MAIL

BERKELEY JAN 3 2 P M 1971 CALIF.

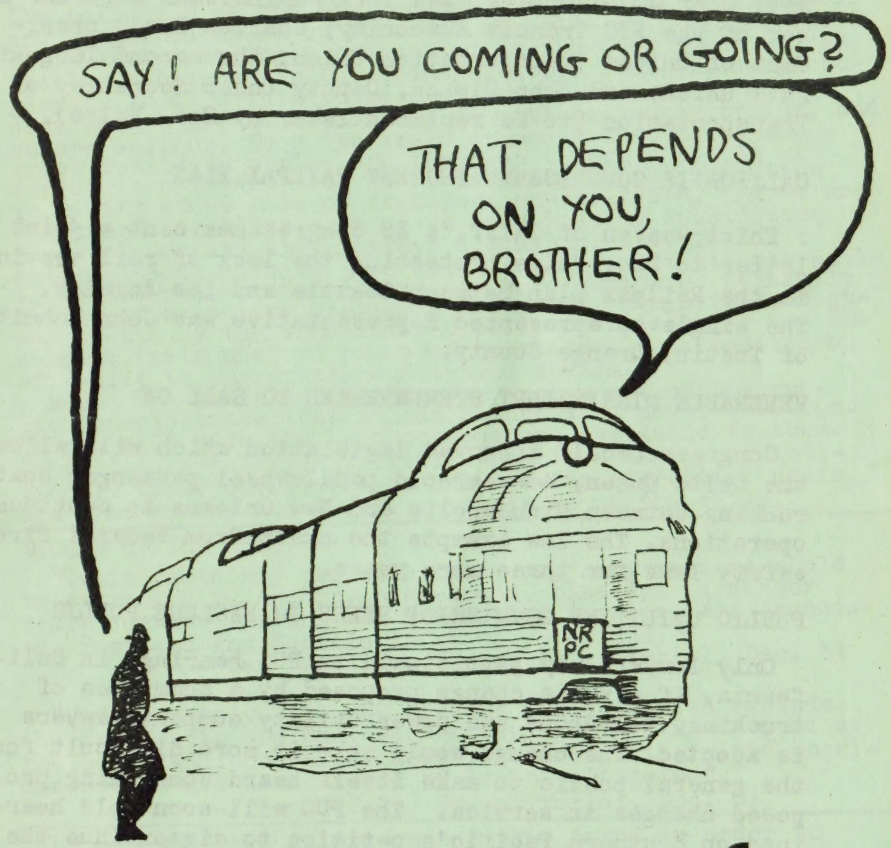
ALWAYS USE ZIP CODE

FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT U.S. POSTAGE

RAIL TRAVEL NEWSLETTER



Volume 1 January 4, 1971 Number 3



1971 year of the train?

PRESIDENT NIXON NAMES RAILPAX DIRECTORS

Shortly before Christmas the President nominated 8 individuals to direct the National Railroad Passenger Corp., subject to Senate approval. Most of them will become part of the 15-member board of directors when the corp. begins functioning. (Three more will be chosen by the railroads and four by stockholders.)

The eight are: David W. Kendall Jr., a Chrysler Corp. vice president; Arthur D. Lewis, former president of Eastern Air Lines; Mrs. Catherine May Bedell, Washington state congresswoman defeated in November; Frank S. Besson Jr., former Army General; David Bradshaw, Chicago attorney; John J. Gilhooley, New York businessman & former member of the NYC Transit Authority; Charles Luna, president of United Transportation Union, the second largest rail union; and John Olsson, Deputy Under Secretary of Transportation (to be replaced later by Sec. Volpe).

CALIFORNIA CONGRESSMEN PROTEST RAILPAX PLAN

Thirty-seven of Calif.'s 38 congressmen sent a joint letter to Sec. Volpe protesting the lack of rail service in the Railpax plan between Seattle and Los Angeles. The single unrepresented Representative was John Schmitz of Tustin, Orange County.

VENERABLE MISSISSIPPI STERNWHEELER TO SAIL ON

Congress Dec.17 approved legislation which will allow the Delta Queen, 44-year-old paddlewheel passenger boat running between Minneapolis and New Orleans to continue operations. The law exempts the craft from Federal fire safety laws for three more years.

PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION SEEKS TO EXCLUDE PUBLIC

Only lawyers may participate in PUC hearings in California, if a rules change proposed by a committee of trucking, telephone and power utility company lawyers is adopted. The change would make it more difficult for the general public to make itself heard concerning proposed changes in service. The PUC will soon hold hearings on Southern Pacific's petition to discontinue the San Joaquin Daylight and the Sacramento Daylight, which run daily between Sacramento, San Francisco and Los Angeles by the San Joaquin Valley route.

Rail Travel Newsletter is published 24 times a year, on the 1st & 3rd Mondays of each month, by Message Media, P.O. Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709, Subscription $4/year; 25¢/copy. Editor:James Russell. Vol.1,No.3;Jan.4,1971.

EDITORIAL: 1971 — YEAR OF THE TRAIN?

We mark the beginning of a new year and, purists tell us, actually the beginning of the new decade. Are we to see a new beginning for passenger trains as well? Thankfully, we are at the end of a decade in which U.S. passenger service reached its lowest point. It is time for a change--a change for the better.

The start of Railpax this year holds opportunities which must be grasped. As with any period of change, there are problems and threats also. We could lose more than we gain under Railpax. But if we press earnestly and intelligently for the right things, chances are we will get them.

The times are on our side. There is a vast outcry over the pollution of the environment and crowding of available and projected space by auto and aircraft over-usage. The train is increasingly recognized as the best means of regaining a balance in our transportation facilities and beginning to alleviate these problems. What's more, we've seen what other countries can do with passenger trains, and we are envious. Even the stale argument that those countries subsidize trains and they can't turn a profit no longer is relevant, for we are now aware that inflation is making every mode of transport unprofitable, and we are starting to realize that we've been heavily subsidizing the airlines and the highways all along, they wouldn't exist without massive government funding, yet all the billions thrown into asphalt and air have gotten us primarily a pile of expensive problems--pollution, congestion, highway deaths by the thousands. Clearly the passenger and the commute train must be promoted to restore some semblance of sanity to our unbalanced travel system.

Maybe the train has sunken far enough out of the public consciousness that it can return as a novel solution. People will ride the best conveyances available to them. It will take relatively little--mostly a change of attitude by their operators--to make trains attractive again, and then we may see a real renaissance of the rails.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK ***

"It is certainly probable that very many persons would be attracted to modern, high-speed, pleasant passenger train service linking San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Portland and Seattle if it was provided."
--San Francisco Chronicle editorial, Dec. 31

"Unfortunately, the ICC concept would seem to exclude the Sacramento and San Joaquin Daylight trains as well as the San Francisco Chief. Surely California's inland corridor should not be stripped of trains altogether."
--Fresno (Cal.) Bee editorial, Dec. 31

(The commute page is pre-empted this issue in order to bring you the late news found on page 6.)

Westerners Urge Changes in Railpax

The article below appeared in the Oakland (Cal.) Tribune Dec.25, 1970, and is reprinted here by permission. Copyright 1970 by Oakland Tribune.

By HARRE W. DEMORO
Tribune Staff Writer

A group of Bay Area men who view Railpax as a good idea to save railway passenger trains but oppose its plan for the Pacific Coast, have vowed to wage a last-ditch battle of convince the Federal Government to retain service between the Pacific Northwest, the Bay Area and Southern California.

Included in the group are the National Association of Railroad passengers, Arthur L. Lloyd, operator of a San Francisco travel agency and president of the American Society of Travel Agents Northern California Chapter, officials of Great Western Tours, Inc., which owns railray cars and leases them for tours, the California-Nevada Railroad Historical Society, and the Pacific Coast Chapter, Railway and Locomotive Historical Society. The latter two groups are non-profit corporations that charter trains to raise funds for historical society programs.

Railpax, a quasigovernment corporation is scheduled to go into the rail passenger business May 1, but there are indications it may not until September. The preliminary plan advanced Nov. 30 by U.S. Transportation Secretary John A. Volpe would eliminate all but two long-haul trains in California.

In a letter to Volpe, Lloyd wrote, in part:

"Four trains west of Chicago and 146 east of Chicago just doesn't make good sense when the present trains of the West are carrying larger passenger loads than most of those in the East . . . California will subsidize the east . . .

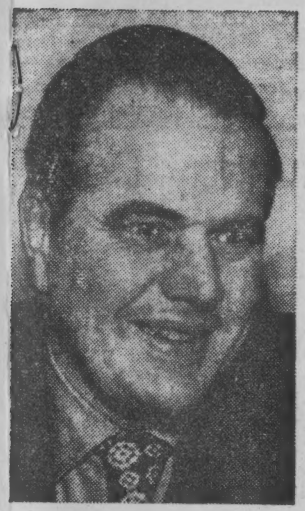
"I cannot but feel that Southern Pacific has exerted a powerful influence here to finally dispense itself of the passenger business, and everyone else's as well, which was their public proclamation several years ago. One of their first moves was to discourage us agents from selling their product by removing the commissionable aspects over their line. Many of us continued to sell this regardless, being convinced as to need and value of rail travel."

Fred A. Stindt, of the Railway and Locomotive Historical Society, said that all Volpe has done is to indicate what cities will be served and to ask for comments. But he has not shown what routes will be provided between the cities mentioned.

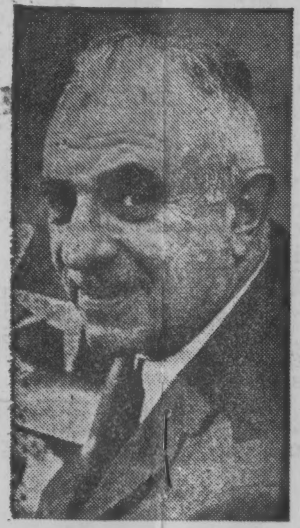
While Volpe wants persons "to make your objections," Stindt said, the question is, "objections to what?"

Under the plan, Seattle, the Bay Area and the Los Angeles area would be linked by rail passenger service to Chicago. But there would be no service between the coastal cities, and none to San Diego.

According to representatives of the organizations and groups, the Southern Pacific, Burlington Northern and Union Pacific railroads have already stated they will not accept reservations after April 30. There are indications other railroads will do the same.



ARTHUR L. LLOYD
'Doesn't make sense'



FRED A. STINDT
'Objections to what?'

Lloyd and others contend this leaves the travel industry in a state of confusion and will make it difficult for Railpax to attract riders in the heavy travel periods next summer. And, they add, there is no place opponents of the plans can go at the federal level to air their complaints.

So, they are planning to flood congressmen, Gov. Ronald Reagan, President Richard Nixon, the State Public Utilities Commission, and just about any other public official they can think of, with letters of complaint.

Lloyd, who with Richard Reynolds of Great Western Tours, was involved in the successful years of the California Zephyr train while employed with Western Pacific Railroad, views Railpax as an excellent method of beginning a national railroad passenger train system.

He and the others generally agree that such a system is required as part of a "transportation system balance" that includes highways, air travel and rail.

Eastern cities will benefit from better rail service under Railpax, Lloyd said, but "it is not going to do the job in the West."

"If Volpe does not change his opinion . . . we've had it," added Scott K. Schiechl of San Francisco, regional chairman of the National Association of Railroad Passengers.

"The proposed national rail passenger system . . . . represents the greatest threat to balanced transportation in a decade," he said. "The elimination of all intra-state service in California (excluding commuter service) should be viewed as wholly inadequate to the needs of this, the largest state in the nation."

Schiechl, in a prepared statement, said that "interference with DOT (Department of Transportation) by certain railroad industry officials was believed to be the primary cause for the drastic curtailment of service, particularly in California." But neither he nor other representatives of the groups could point to specific cases where the railroads attempted to influence federal officials.

A major problem, said Ralph Kerchum, a National Association of Railroad Passengers member, longtime rail historian and principal of Laurel School in Oakland, is that much new equipment will be required to lure riders back to trains. Railroads in other countries are doing well with passenger trains, he said, and people in the United States will ride trains "if you give them a fast train and run it clean."

Lloyd said he realized even well-run passenger trains probably won't be profitable. But, he said, travel agents cannot "sell" the type of service proposed by Railpax. Good rail service can be sold "without question," he said.

* * *

Half-price charter subscription to Rail Travel Newsletter still available — Only one dollar for six months. Write MESSAGE MEDIA, Dept. RTN, P. O. Box 9007, Berkeley, CA 94709.

LAST-MINUTE PLEAS TO EXTEND RAILPAX NETWORK

The final day to submit proposed Railpax changes saw these recommendations on their way to Secretary Volpe:

* The ICC asked that trains between San Diego & Seattle be included, citing the "notorious highway congestion and air pollution problems" of the West Coast. The Sunset route should retain its tri-weekly Los Angeles-New Orleans trains, the ICC said, and a direct Washington-Chicago run should be provided. Additionally, Minneapolis-St.Paul should be included by running the Seattle-Chicago trains via those cities, and the San Francisco-Chicago run was recommended to go by the former Calif. Zephyr route in order to give service to Denver and Salt Lake City and to preserve the scenic run the Zephyr made famous. The West Coast of Florida should be included, argued the ICC, due to heavy vacation travel and the numbers of retired people there. The ICC specified some secondary recommendations for other routes: Salt Lake City-Butte; St. Louis-Kansas City; St. Louis-Detroit; Charlottesville-Norfolk and Portsmouth; Chicago-Boston via Detroit and Buffalo; Seattle-Vancouver B.C.; Chicago-Toronto via Detroit; New York-Montreal; and Chicago-Laredo via San Antonio to connect with Mexican trains.

* The Calif. State Public Utilities Commission urged Volpe to include service between San Francisco & San Diego. It did not take a stand on interstate service, but has opposed interstate cuts in the past. Southern Pacific had urged the PUC not to propose changes in the Railpax plan. Changes such as those the PUC suggested would increase the cost of SP's buying into the Railpax corporation. The PUC cited the great population increase in the Pacific Coast cities in the past decade and the fact that the San Francisco-Los Angeles air corridor is carrying twice as many passengers as the second largest U.S. corridor, Boston-N.Y. Recent rail passenger figures were cited: SP carried 153,000 people between L.A. and S.F., while Santa Fe carried 347,000 L.A.-San Diego.

* Mayor Sam Yorty of Los Angeles asked Volpe in a letter to include Los Angeles-Seattle and Los Angeles-New Orleans service in the Railpax system.

* Francis A. Guido, editor of The Western Railroader, called the new system "Railpox" and suggested that Volpe may meet Hickel's fate in being forced out of office.

WINTER WEATHER EAST AND WEST SNARLS TRANSPORTATION

A New Year's Day snowstorm, biggest of the season, hit the East, closing airports, snarling auto traffic, and delaying some trains. In the West, the SP City of San Francisco was delayed almost 4 hrs. in the Sierras Dec.29 due to snow which reached 10-foot depths in places. The westbound 12-car train had 186 passengers. The delay occurred at Norden, 16 miles east of where the train was snowbound for two days in 1952.

LETTERS

CHICAGO-MILWAUKEE MINI-CORRIDOR NEEDS BETTER SCHEDULES

As you know, both the Chicago & North Western and the Milwaukee Road serve the Chicago-Milwaukee route, but without any attempt to operate a customer-oriented joint schedule. My suggestions for a meaningful schedule are:

Present Schedules				Proposed Schedules			
LV MIL.		ARR CHIC.		LV MIL.		ARR CHIC.	
CNW	7:40 am	9:15 am	XSH	Mil	8:00 am	9:35 am	XSH
Mil	7:50 am	9:20 am	XSH	CNW	10:00 am	11:37 am	(1)
CNW	9:58 am	11:35 am	(1)	Mil	12:00 n	1:30 pm	
Mil	11:30 am	1:00 pm		Mil	2:00 pm	3:30 pm	(2)
Mil	2:10 pm	3:40 pm	(2)	CNW	4:00 pm	5:45 pm	
CNW	4:10 pm	5:55 pm	XSH	CNW	6:00 pm	7:50 pm	
Mil	4:20 pm	5:50 pm		CNW	8:00 pm	9:45 pm	(1)
CNW	5:40 pm	7:30 pm	SHonly	Mil	10:30 pm	11:59 pm	
CNW	7:45 pm	9:30 pm	(1)				
CNW	8:15 pm	9:55 pm	SHonly				

(1) With "Sip & Snack" car; (2) With "Buffeteria" car.

Note that the above changes result in no additional trains being run, only running trains at spread intervals. The changes are accomplished with only minor schedule alterations for through Green Bay and Minneapolis trains (no more than 10 minutes adjustment), and further they eliminate the ridiculous ten-minute headways at 7:40 and 4:10. The same type of changes can be made out of Chicago, where the problems are even worse; for example, you cannot leave after 7:25 pm, the last night train. There is no service at all from 11:20 am to 4:12 pm.

Herb Danneman

Brookfield, Wisc.

HOW TO KILL A PASSENGER TRAIN — No.3 of a series

With some care and attention to detail the progressive railroad executive can make a railroad station an environment to turn off even the most dedicated rail fan. Maintenance men can be instructed to sweep floors just before train departure times. P.A. systems can be rigged to totally garble any announcements, which are then given at random intervals in urgent tones of voice, creating a Kafkaesque atmosphere. The public can be prohibited from taking photographs on railroad property. Such steps, coupled with the usual one of sign removal to make location of the station difficult, can go far towards cutting public usage of your passenger trains.